

1 Introduced by Committee on Education

2 Date:

3 Subject: Education; school safety

4 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to require 1)  
5 public schools to adopt a policy mandating bi-annual options-based response  
6 drills; 2) approved independent schools to conduct bi-annual options-based  
7 response drills following the template developed by the Vermont School  
8 Safety Center; 3) public schools to adopt all-hazards emergency operation  
9 plans; 4) public schools to adopt an access control and visitor management  
10 policy; 5) approved independent schools to adopt access control and visitor  
11 management procedures; and 6) public and approved independent schools to  
12 create a behavioral threat assessment team.

13 An act relating to school safety

14 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

15 Sec. 1. 16 V.S.A. § 1481 is amended to read:

16 § 1481. FIRE AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS DRILLS

17 (a) ~~The principal or person in charge of a public or independent school or~~  
18 ~~another educational institution, other than a university or college, shall drill the~~  
19 ~~students so they are able to leave the school building or perform other~~  
20 ~~procedures described in the school's emergency preparedness plan, or both, in~~

1 ~~the shortest possible time and without panic or confusion.~~ Each supervisory  
2 union or supervisory district that operates a school shall adopt a policy  
3 mandating each school site to conduct an options-based response drill each  
4 year in the fall and spring of the academic year. The policy shall require that  
5 drills be conducted following the template developed by the Vermont School  
6 Safety Center jointly with the Vermont School Crisis Planning Team. A  
7 superintendent shall report completion of the bi-annual drills to the Agency of  
8 Education in a format approved by the Secretary.

9 (b) ~~A drill shall be held at least once in each month during the school year~~  
10 ~~and a record of the date and time of the drill, together with the time consumed~~  
11 ~~in completing the procedure, shall be kept in the official school register, and~~  
12 ~~such register shall be open at all times for inspection by representatives from~~  
13 ~~the Fire Safety Division of the Department of Public Safety or the Agency of~~  
14 ~~Education.~~ Each approved or recognized independent school or other  
15 educational institution, other than a university or college, shall conduct an  
16 options-based response drill each year in the fall and the spring of the  
17 academic year. Drills shall be conducted following the template developed by  
18 the Vermont School Safety Center jointly with the Vermont School Crisis  
19 Planning Team. The head of school shall report completion of the biannual  
20 drills to the Agency of Education in a format approved by the Secretary.

1 (c) A school district, independent school, or educational institution whose  
2 administrative personnel neglect to comply with the provisions of this section  
3 shall be fined not more than \$500.00.

4 (d) Annually, the Vermont School Safety Center and Agency of Education  
5 shall review the reports submitted according to this section and shall ensure  
6 compliance and identify future planning and training needs.

7 Sec. 2. 16 V.S.A. § 1480 is added to read:

8 § 1480. EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLANS

9 (a) Each supervisory union or supervisory district shall adopt an all-hazards  
10 emergency operations plan that is at least as comprehensive as the template  
11 maintained by the Vermont School Crisis Planning Team. The plan shall be  
12 updated on an annual basis, including collaboration with local emergency first  
13 responders and emergency management officials.

14 (b) The Vermont School Crisis Planning Team shall maintain a template  
15 emergency operations plan and update the template as appropriate.

16 Sec. 3. 16 V.S.A. § 1484 is added to read:

17 § 1484. ACCESS CONTROL AND VISITOR MANAGEMENT POLICY

18 (a) Each supervisory union or supervisory district shall adopt a policy that,  
19 at minimum, requires that all school sites and supervisory union and  
20 supervisory district offices lock exterior doors during the school day. The

1 policy shall require that all visitors sign in at a centralized location prior to  
2 gaining full access to the school or office site.

3 (b) Each approved independent school shall adopt written procedures  
4 consistent with the requirements in subsection (a) of this section.

5 Sec. 4. 16 V.S.A. § 1485 is added to read:

6 § 1485. BEHAVIORAL THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAMS

7 (a) Each supervisory union or supervisory district and each approved  
8 independent school shall appoint a behavioral threat assessment team to be  
9 comprised of, at a minimum, administrators, mental health professionals, a  
10 school counselor, a school nurse, and local law enforcement officials.

11 Members of the team shall be trained at least annually in best practices of  
12 conducting behavioral threat assessments. Superintendents and heads of  
13 independent schools shall report data related to behavioral threat assessment  
14 results to the Agency in a format approved by the Secretary.

15 (b) Annually, each supervisory union, supervisory district, or approved  
16 independent school shall report the names of the members of its behavioral  
17 assessment team to the Agency of Education in a format approved by the  
18 Secretary.

19 Sec. 5. EFFECTIVE DATES

20 (a) This section shall take effect on July 1, 2023.

1        (b) Secs. 1 (16 V.S.A. § 1481) and 3 (16 V.S.A. § 1484 ) shall take effect  
2        on August 1, 2023.

3        (c) Secs. 2 (16 V.S.A. § 1480) and 4 (16 V.S.A. § 1485) shall take effect on  
4        July 1, 2024.